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US-Army
Medical Library

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Present the present situation of the Surgeon General's library in Washington. The attitude of the Department of Defense is that the library is not a proper charge on the defense of the US and the suggestion has been made that the NRC constitute a committee to prepare a report on the library with recommendations as to what should be done. The Index Catalogue was discontinued in January 1950. It is perfectly clear that the library needs a large new building and that its major functions are a lending library, a storage of a truly remarkable collection of medical literature, and the place where the Index Catalogue or something comparable could and should be produced. These functions do not demand location in Washington but they do call for a building that would probably cost \$10 million, and the maintenance of the service and the Index Catalogue would probably come to an annual cost of \$2,500,000.

W asked me to be the chairman of an NRC committee and prepare a report. I told him that the reasons that I would probably not be able to accept this task were (1) that my job calls for too much travel and sometimes for absences from the US of two months or more; (2) that my travel, together with some government jobs I have, constitutes all I can do; and (3) that I am not particularly familiar with medical library administration or its problems. Told him I would think it over carefully, however, since the Surgeon General's library has a world importance in the field of medical literature. I later wrote W that I could not assume this responsibility.

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